



## U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell Washington

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### Cantwell: EPA Study of Bristol Bay Confirms Risk to WA Fishing Jobs

#### *EPA Issues Draft Study Detailing Likely Impacts of Large-Scale Mining in Bristol Bay*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA) released the following statement on the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) draft watershed assessment that analyzed the potential impact of a major development project in Bristol Bay, Alaska.

**"The watershed assessment released today is an important step towards protecting wild Bristol Bay salmon and the thousands of Washington state jobs that rely on them," Cantwell said. "This draft report validates the concerns of the Alaska and Washington fishing fleets that the proposed Pebble Mine could have devastating impacts to the Pacific Northwest's maritime economy.**

Thousands of Washington state jobs -- including commercial and recreational fishing, processing, shipbuilding and the restaurant industry -- depend on healthy, sustainable wild salmon populations. Bristol Bay is the most productive salmon run in the world, generating a total value of approximately \$500 million dollars each year and supporting 14,000 full and part-time jobs.

**"I will continue to fight to protect Washington jobs and to ensure that any decisions on major Bristol Bay development are made based on sound science," Cantwell continued. "I'm glad that the EPA will be holding a public meeting in Seattle that will enable Washingtonians to weigh in on the potential impact of any large scale Bristol Bay development."**

Earlier in May, Cantwell asked EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson to hold a public meeting in Washington state, following the release of the draft watershed assessment.

In a [September letter to Jackson](#), Cantwell became the first U.S. Senator to call on the EPA to use its Clean Water Act 404(c) authority to block any large development project in Bristol Bay if science determined that the project would "have unacceptable adverse impacts on water quality and the fish

stocks that depend on it.”

**“Bristol Bay is an American jobs factory, providing more than 12,000 jobs in the commercial fishing and seafood processing industries. Nearly 1,000 Washingtonians hold permits to fish Bristol Bay commercially, and they turn around and hire crew and buy supplies and services that support countless other businesses,”** said Ben Blakey, a second-generation fishing captain from Bainbridge Island. **“We hope the EPA and the Obama Administration will make sure that Washington’s stakeholders are heard as they assess the state and scope of this world-class fishery.”**

**“Thanks to Sen. Cantwell for standing up for Bristol Bay’s one of a kind fishery and all of the jobs in Washington and Alaska that rely on it,”** said John Fairbanks, commercial fisherman from Bellingham and board member of the Bristol Bay Regional Seafood Development Association. **“Senator Cantwell has been a champion on this issue and fishermen around the country appreciate her leadership.”**

Nearly 1,000 Washingtonians hold commercial fishing permits in Bristol Bay. In 2008, Bristol Bay yielded over \$113 million dollars in total value for Washington state commercial fishers. Recreational salmon fishers yielded an additional \$75 million for Washington state businesses alone.

**“The fishermen from Washington who fish commercially in Bristol Bay spend money in Washington state getting their boats and nets ready for the season, buying supplies and more. And they spend money in Alaska on fuel, supplies and services, supporting another regional economy,”** Said Brendan Flynn, a Puget Sound and Bristol Bay fisherman from Lopez Island, Wash. **“People in Washington have a lot at stake when it comes to the health of Bristol Bay’s sockeye runs and we want a voice in the process.”**

**“Our customers know Bristol Bay is one of the premier sport fishing destinations on the planet,”** said Travis Campbell, CEO of Sage Manufacturing, a manufacturer of fly fishing rods and other angling equipment, and employer of 180 people on Bainbridge Island. **“People in Washington state are very invested in both the sport and commercial fishery of Bristol Bay.”**

In addition to commercial fishery jobs, nearly all the major seafood corporations that process Bristol Bay catches are based in Washington, including Snopac Products, Peter Pan Seafoods, Ocean Beauty, Alaska General Seafoods, Icicle, North Pacific Seafoods, and Leader Creek.

**“The connections between Washington and Alaska’s economies from the Bristol Bay fishery run deep,”** said Norm Van Vactor, of Leader Creek Fisheries, a Seattle seafood processing company. **“Bristol Bay’s sockeye salmon runs support thousands of jobs, feed people around the world and support countless businesses like ours.”**

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